

State of North Carolina Department of Justice

Roy Cooper Attorney General

P. O. Box 629 Raleigh, N.C. 27602

June 24, 2013

TO:

North Carolina Jouse of Rep & intatives

FROM:

Rov Cooper

RE:

Opposition to Elimination of Pistol Permit Program

House Bill 937 has come back to you from the Senate with a provision that eliminates the requirement of obtaining a pistol permit from the local sheriff before a handgun can be acquired.

As I said two weeks ago when this appeared in a Senate committee, I strongly oppose ending the pistol permit program.

Currently, pistol permits are issued by local sheriffs who check applicants for citizenship, felony or domestic violence convictions, commitment to mental institutions or drug abuse. While federal background checks apply to those purchasing handguns and other weapons from federally licensed gun dealers, the pistol permit program applies to <u>all</u> individual buyers at gun shows or anywhere else. Therefore, eliminating pistol permit background checks means more criminals, domestic abusers and the mentally ill can legally buy handguns.

It is true that the pistol permit program is not perfect, however, we should look at ways to strengthen it instead of eliminating it. Between 40% and 50% of all reported murders committed in North Carolina over the past ten years were by people using handguns.

Both the North Carolina Sheriffs' Association and the North Carolina Association of Chiefs of Police oppose this provision as well. I urge you to oppose eliminating the pistol permit program to help protect the public.